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26 March 2002

SPRUSON & FERGUSON
GPO Box 3898
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Your Ref : 529302

Examiner's first report on patent application no. 71986/00
by CANON KABUSHIKI KAISHA

Dear Madam/Sir,

I am replying to the request for normal examination. I have examined the application and I believe that there are lawful grounds of objection to the application. These grounds of objection are:

1. There is no Notice of Entitlement on file.
2. Claim 83 is not clear. The claim refers to "a series of images according to any one of the preceding claims," however none of the preceding claims are to a series of images. It is also unclear what is meant by "an edited sequence of images formed through implementation of a series of images."
3. Claims 26 and 49 are not clear, because there is no antecedent to "said information." Perhaps the claims were intended to be appended to claims 24 and 47, respectively?
4. Claims 16, 25, 45 and 48 are not novel when compared to the document "Face Detection for Image Annotation" (WEI, G. and SETHI, I. K.), Pattern Recognition Letters, vol 20 (11-13), November 1999. (Please find a copy of this document attached.) This citation discloses all the features of the claimed invention. In particular, the top of column 2, page 1315 states that "the classification is done simply by counting the number of faces and their respective locations in the image."

You have 21 months from the date of this report to overcome all my objections, otherwise your application will lapse. You will need to pay a fee for any response you file after 12 months from the date of this report.

Yours faithfully,

M. Hollingworth

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our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,


Attorney for Applicant

Registration No. 25,823

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